

Denmark Census Records: 1700-1940

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Key Censuses

1700

A census of males survives for Åkær, Skanderborg, and Frederiksborg counties. When I saw Skanderborg and Frederiksborg, I am referring to the counties as they existed at the time in 1700. In 1793, several of the existing counties were combined to make larger ones and those counties are the ones that most people think of when doing their genealogy. Here is a map of the counties as they existed 1662-1793. Use this to determine if your ancestor might be in this census.



These censuses are preserved in three volumes at the FamilySearch Library. To access click here <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/1011367?>

1769

This was the first nationwide census. It was conducted in Kingdom of Denmark and the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein. It recorded the names, ages, occupation, and relationship to the head of household for each person, all excellent information for a genealogist. Unfortunately, only about 3% of this census has survived and you will most

likely never end up using it.

Although most of the genealogical information has not survived the statistical data has. 797,584 people were enumerated on it and from this data it is possible to accurately predict Denmark's population back to about 1730. All population figures prior to 1730 are only estimations and people disagree.

1771 Oeders Efterretninger

In 1771, Georg Christian Edler von Oeder (1728-1791) gathered information about widowed and married couples exists in the Sjælland Diocese which consisted of the islands of Sjælland, Amager, Møn, and Bornholm. Oeder did this because he was helping create a budget to care for widows. According to Wikipedia, Oeder did this by extracting the information from the 1769 census which was still intact at the time, but the source for this is a broken hyperlink so I don't know if that is actually true. Regardless, this is an invaluable source for genealogists.

Oeders Efterretninger is divided by *amt* (county), *herred* (district), and then *sogn* (parish). Within each parish, there are three lists, one for married couples, one for widowers, and one for widows. A little more information is provided for widows and widowers because information about their minor children is also provided.

For married couples:

- Gives the husband's name, age, occupation, and how many times married
- Gives the wife's age, and how many times married but usually does not name the wife

For widowers:

- Gives his name, age, occupation, and how many times widowed and how many minor children he and his last wife have, but usually does not name the husband or children

For widows

- Gives his name, age, occupation, and how many times widowed and how many minor children he and his last wife have

If you are trying to get to Oeders Efterretninger on Danks Demografisk Database, it is under the "Andre Databaser" option. If you want to access it on Arkivalieronline, click here <https://www.sa.dk/ao-soegesider/da/billedviser?epid=22716466#476759,85317356>.

1787

- Second census in the Kingdom of Denmark and the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein

- Survives for the entire kingdom but only a handful of parishes in Schleswig and none in Holstein
- Recorded the names, ages, occupation, and relationship to the head of household for each person
- The census was done in August when many seasonal workers were away
- You will use this and the later censuses often: Research after 1787 is much easier than research before 1787

1801

- Done in the Kingdoms of Denmark and Norway but not Schleswig
- 925,080 People enumerated in the Kingdom of Denmark
- Generally thought to mark when Denmark resumed its pre-Black Death population (1348)
- Starting in 1801 census day was moved to February 1st when most people were home
- February 1st remained census day until 1925 when it was moved to November 1st

1803

- A separate census was done in Schleswig-Holstein

1834

- Only done in the Kingdom of Denmark
- From this point on a new census was done every 4-11 years up until 1970
- Research after 1834 is much easier than any other Danish research

1835

- A separate census was done in Schleswig-Holstein

1840

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein
- Censuses were now done every five years

1845

- The first census to provide the birthplace, usually down to the exact parish
- Women who lived long enough to be on this census are much easier to research than those who did not

1850

- A census was done in the kingdom of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein

1855

- The first census to provide a person's religion. This is particularly useful if your ancestor's joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and emigrated

1860

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein. This is the last census done in Schleswig-Holstein since those duchies were ceded to Prussia in 1864.
- Censuses also now switch from being every five years to every ten years. I suspect that the 1864 war was the cause for there not being an 1865 census.

1870

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1880

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1885

- A census was done in Copenhagen

1890

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1895

- A census was done in Copenhagen

1901

- The first census to provide exact birthdates
- Was probably done in 1901 so it could be exactly 100 years after the 1801 census
- Starting in 1901, censuses were done every five years

1906

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1911

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1916

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1921

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark

1925

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark
- Census day was switched to November 1st
- The gap between 1921 and 1925 is the smallest gap between censuses

1930

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark
- Starting in 1930 censuses were done every ten years

1940

- A census was done in the Kingdom of Denmark
- There are later censuses, but this is the latest one that has been published due to privacy laws

Accessing the Censuses

Dansk Demografisk Database (www.ddd.dda.dk)

This is my favorite website for accessing the censuses. The censuses are being abstracted into this website as a searchable database, but the process is still not complete. Generally it has most of the censuses up until 1850 and then also has 1860, 1880, and 1901 complete in its database but the other years are hit or miss. To see if your parish and time period is in the database click here <https://www.dis-danmark.dk/kipkort/index.php>. You will be taken to a matrix where you choose the desired census year and the desired county. Each parish will be color coded as follows:

- White: Not in the database at all
- Yellow: Partially in the database
- Blue: In the database
- Green: In the database and audited
- Grey: Doesn't Exist

This website is an exact only search unless you use wild cards. I recommend that you use wild cards for the letters that can vary in the way a name is spelled. If you don't know which ones those are, guess the vowels.

Dansk Demografisk Database has an English option but it has far less features than the Danish version. I recommend learning to use the Danish version.

If you are trying to get to Oeders Efterretninger on this site, it is under the "Andre Databaser" option.

Arkivalieronline (www.sa.dk)

This is the national archives of Denmark and therefore the repository with the most available records. If you do not use this website, you will be unable to do intermediate or advanced Danish research correctly.

Arkivalieronline is concerned about publishing scans for as many records as possible rather than indexing. They are the opposite of Dansk Demografisk Database. They have scans but no computer searchable databases.

I have seen Arkivalieronline change their homepage several times but it usually does not affect the pages records are stored on it just changes the click-flow you need to do to get to that page. Here is how you do it as of 20 September 2023:

1. Go to www.sa.dk
2. Under where it says "Søg i:" click on "Arkivalieronline"
3. Scroll down to where it says "Mest benyttede temaer" and click on "Folketællinger"

You should now be at this page. <https://www.sa.dk/ao-soegesider/da/collection/theme/2>. This page hardly if ever changes and the process from here on forward is always the same.

4. There are four options: "Folketællingen (Vestindien)" for the West Indies, "Folketællinger" for the Kingdom of Denmark, "Folketællinger, Sønderjylland" for Schleswig-Holstein, and "Tyske Folketællingenkort, 1885" for Prussian civil registration cards, click the one you want which is probably the second one.
5. On the Folketællinger page, the censuses for the "landdistrikter" (rural areas), "købstader" (cities), Grønland (Greenland), and "Færøerne" (the Faero Islands) are all in separate categories, find the one corresponding to the year that you want. The years are not in order. The 1850 census is at the top but there are earlier and later ones too if you just scroll down.
6. After you pick the one you want you will be taken to a page with three dropdowns for the "amt" (county), "herred" (district), and "sogn" (parish), choose the parish you want and then start browsing through the images.

Arkivalieronline does not do well if translated into English. It is best to learn a few key words to navigate the site better.

If you want to access Oeder's efterretninger on Arkivalieronline, click here <https://www.sa.dk/ao-soegesider/da/billedviser?epid=22716466#476759,85317356>.

MyHeritage

For the entire country, MyHeritage has indexed all of the censuses and provides the original image when you find a hit. Unfortunately, the place name data is not well preserved prior to 1850. If you search for a person on a census prior to that, most of the hits will say his name and just that he is living in Denmark without specifying what country and parish. If you click to see the original image it will provide the parish information there but that slows things down a lot.

FamilySearch

For the entire country, FamilySearch currently has all of the censuses from 1834-1930 indexed and provides the original image when you find a hit. FamilySearch's database is

very good and as it expands it will probably become the main one I use.

Danish FamilySearch

For the entire country, Danish FamilySearch has indexed most of the censuses from 1787 until 1901 and then it is hit or miss after that. It provides the original image as well. Danish FamilySearch is popular among missionaries and guests because it works well in English.